

Re Item III.

Due to the excessively broad nature of claim 1, only a limited search was carried out on the matter of claims 1-9 and 13. The matter thus searched was limited to the application described in claim 14 (magnetic medium) and the matter of the method of fabrication (claims 17-20). The International Search Opinion applies only to the claims thus wholly or partially searched: 1-9 and 13 (partial), 14-16 (fully searched) and 17-20 (fully searched).

Claims 10-12 are not dealt with in this report, having not been searched on the grounds of excessively broad scope (11, 12) or obscurity (10).

Re Item V.

- 1 The following documents are referred to in this communication:

D1 : PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1999, no. 13, 30 November 1999
(1999-11-30) & JP 11 224422 A (NIPPON TELEGR & TELEPH CORP
<NTT>; NTT ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY C), 17 August 1999 (1999-
08-17)
D2 : US 6 139 713 A (TAMAMURA TOSHIKI ET AL) 31 October 2000 (2000-
10-31)

- 2 Document D1 discloses:

The matter of claims 1-9, 13 and 14 in the particular embodiment of a magnetic disk.

2.1 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 1

As can be seen from the above, document D1 discloses in combination all the features defined in independent claim 1. Hence the subject-matter of this claim is not new (Article 33(2) PCT).

2.2 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 13

As can be seen from the above, document D1 discloses in combination all the features defined in independent claim 13. Hence the subject-matter of this claim is not new (Article 33(2) PCT).

2.3 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 14

As can be seen from the above, document D1 discloses in combination all the features defined in independent claim 14. Hence the subject-matter of this claim is not new (Article 33(2) PCT).

3 Document D2 discloses:

a method of manufacturing a structure as disclosed in claims 1-9.

3.1 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 17

As can be seen from the above, document D2 discloses in combination all the features defined in independent claim 17. Hence the subject-matter of this claim is not new (Article 33(2) PCT).

4 DEPENDENT CLAIMS 2-9, 15, 16, 18-20

Dependent claims 2-9, 15, 16, 18-20 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step (Article 33(2) and (3) PCT).